

AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE

AIR UNIVERSITY

Fall 2010
PASEX After Action Report

by

Raymond J. Besson, Major, USAF

An After Action Report Submitted to the Faculty
In Partial Fulfillment of the Graduation Requirements

Advisor: Edwina S. Campbell, PhD

Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama

April 2010

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this academic after action report are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the US government or the Department of Defense. In accordance with Air Force Instruction 51-303, it is not copyrighted, but is the property of the United States government.

Contents

Disclaimer	ii
Executive Summary	4
Strengths	4
Areas for Improvement	5
Chapter 1 - Exercise Overview	5
Chapter 2 – Exercise Goals and Objectives	8
Chapter 3 – Exercise Events Synopsis	8
Chapter 4 - Analysis of Mission Outcomes	13
Chapter 5 - Analysis of Critical Task Performance	16
Conclusions	18
Exercise Lessons Learned	18
PASEX Recommendations	19
Other Feedback	21
List of Attachments	22
Attachment 1 – Indonesian Primer	See Attachment 1
Attachment 2 – Indonesian Initial Scenario SITREP	See Attachment 2
Attachment 3 – PASEX Student Guide	See Attachment 3
Attachment 4 – Indonesian STARTEX SITREP	See Attachment 4
Attachment 5 – Mission Analysis Brief	See Attachment 5

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief efforts present challenges to the US today and for the foreseeable future. Preparedness requires a continual process of education and awareness of the challenges which may be faced in a crisis situation. This report is intended to assist future Political Affairs Strategist students in understanding the complexities associated with conducting such operations in an international environment while also allowing the Air Command and Staff College, Political Affairs Strategist faculty to enhance the learning experience for students selected to participate in a future PASEX. As such, it identifies:

- Strengths to be maintained and built upon
- Potential areas for improvement
- Recommendations for future exercises

The suggested actions in this report should be viewed as recommendations only. In some cases implementation may outweigh the costs (in terms of time and resources). In other cases, the Air Command and Staff College, Political Affairs Strategist faculty may identify alternative solutions which may prove equally effective.

The Air Command and Staff College, Political Affairs Strategist Program developed and conducted a 1-day crisis action planning exercise March 24, 2010. The exercise simulated a humanitarian assistance/disaster relief scenario in the country of Indonesia following a massive series of earthquakes in the region. The exercise was the program's first to be incorporated into the Political Affairs Strategist syllabus at Air Command and Staff College.

The exercise included the designation of students to participate as members of an Indonesian Country Team and/or Pacific Command Joint Planning Group. Participants planned and coordinated initial actions for humanitarian assistance/disaster relief to the region and developed a mission analysis briefing for evaluator review.

Strengths

Key strengths identified include the following:

- The participants of both teams demonstrated excellent teamwork
- A significant increase in the understanding of the complexities involved in conducting HA/DR in the international environment
- The planning coordination demonstrated by both teams was excellent
- PASEX students demonstrated an initial capacity to manage crisis action planning requirements with a limited ability to communicate and limited experience on the subject
- PASEX students demonstrated a positive attitude and the ability to recognize, react, and adapt to shortfalls in a newly implemented exercise scenario

Areas for Improvement

Upon completion of the exercise, several areas for improvement were identified. These areas for improvement include those for PASEX students and for the PASEX itself.

PASEX Students

- PASEX students must be proactive in preparing for the exercise. Sufficient time was allotted to develop questions and address areas of concern prior to execution.
- Students must recognize that there will always be room for improvement and be prepared to work through various situations as they arise.

PASEX

- There should be more direction with regard to what is expected from each of the individual roles within the exercise scenario.
- The exercise should be extended to 3-4 days of execution to provide the opportunity to delve more deeply into a level of detail representative of a true crisis scenario.
- Future application of a PASEX HA/DR scenario should include a mission analysis briefing template to help ensure the appropriate emphasis is placed on key elements as they pertain to the scenario.
- The PASEX should be coordinated with the agencies students are simulating to promote effective crosstalk and enhanced learning.

CHAPTER 1 – EXERCISE OVERVIEW

Exercise Name: Political Affairs Strategist Exercise (PASEX)

Duration: 1 duty day (8 hours)

Exercise Date: March 24, 2010

Sponsor: Air Command and Staff College

Type of Exercise: Tabletop

Funding Source: Air Command and Staff College

Program: Political Affairs Strategist

Focus: Crisis Action Planning Initial Response

Classification: Unclassified

Scenario: Indonesian Earthquake

Location: Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, Alabama

Participating Organizations: Air Command and Staff College DER

Participants:

Faculty: Lieutenant Colonel Thomas M. Weaver, Mr. Charles T. Kamps

Students: Major Raymond J. Besson, Major Pedro E. Matos, Major Gina L. Prevett, Major Christopher B. Morris, Major Charles L. Shaw, Major Craig A. Mockler, Major Hunter K. Jones, Major Todd W. Sullivan, Major Scott A. Dutkus, Major Layne D. Trosper, Major Edgardo Cruz-Velez, Major Angela Y. Kim, Major Anthony T. Montelepre, Major Robert T. Kammerer, Major Eleanor S. Peredo

Number of Participants:

Players: 17

PACOM JPG Team: 7 (1x JPG Team Lead, 3x Plans Cell, 2x Log Cell, 1x Pol-Mil)

Indonesian Country Team (ICT): 8 (1x Deputy Chief of Mission, 1x Counselor Management, 2x Military Attachés for Defense Cooperation, 2x Political Counselors, 1x Regional Security Officer, 1x USAID Mission Director)

Evaluators: 1

Observers: 3 (1x shared role as an evaluator, 1x guest observer)

Exercise Overview: The Political Affairs Strategist Exercise (PASEX) was designed to be a 1-day Crisis Action Planning exercise. The goal of the exercise was to familiarize the PAS students with difficulties associated with crisis action planning and inter-agency coordination.

The exercise was designed to:

1. Allow PAS students to develop an appreciation for the complexity of interagency coordination.
2. Provide PAS students with an opportunity to conduct crisis action planning as part of an interagency response to a complex international disaster.
3. Support the PAS elective by providing a scenario based exercise where designated PAS students role play various offices and agencies involved in the US government response to Humanitarian Assistance (HA)/Disaster Relief (DR) crisis operations.

4. Build on the ACSC core curriculum by providing PAS students an opportunity to apply the principles and concepts learned during the Joint Forces (JF) and Joint Planning (JP) courses of the ACSC curriculum.

Students were advised that the exercise was a graded event to test their ability to apply the principles and concepts learned during the JF and JP courses of the ACSC curriculum within a structured learning environment. Throughout the exercise, evaluators monitored student performance and collected information to assess performance using “real-world” examples and course materials as the framework. Observers also monitored student performance and provided the necessary guidance to facilitate learning.

Throughout the exercise, the lead Evaluator provided scenario injects. These injects were in the form of messages which were subsequently implemented into the scenario through phone calls and/or e-mail between individuals and agencies.

The exercise consisted of a 1-day tabletop exercise culminating in a PACOM Mission Analysis brief to the Commander.

Tabletop Exercise: PASEX students participated in a tabletop crisis action planning exercise that tested their critical thinking, decision-making, and communication skills in providing an accurate and appropriate US government response to an international crisis. PACOM JPG and ICT students were provided an updated situation brief and instructed to begin coordination of a US response. The PACOM JPG Team was required to produce a mission analysis brief for the Commander NLT 1400 CST.

The Mission Analysis brief was conducted in the PACOM seminar room in the presence of the entire PACOM JPG Team, the ICT, and the Lead Evaluator. Evaluator feedback of the Mission Analysis was provided throughout the brief. Overall student performance was provided once the briefing was complete.

Exercise Evaluation: The exercise was designed to provide students with an opportunity to perform the time-critical tasks required to facilitate a rapid and appropriate HA/DR response to an international crisis. Through an assessment of the process, students recognized the importance of clear, correct, and timely dissemination of information to the appropriate agencies. Students also identified the difficulties associated with filtering data to ensure relevancy to US capabilities and the current situation.

The Evaluator split time between the ICT and the PACOM JPG Team to observe and record exercise events and student actions. Immediately following the termination of the exercise, the Evaluator conducted a formal debrief and solicited student feedback concerning execution. All students were instructed to provide formal feedback regarding their opinions of the exercise, including strengths and areas for improvement, as well as its relevancy to the PAS program at ACSC.

Student feedback was compiled by the PACOM JPG Team Chief and the ICT Leader. The information was reviewed and prioritized to make recommendations for improvement and identify areas of emphasis for future application of an HA/DR exercise as part of the PAS curriculum at ACSC.

As an evaluated exercise, individual and team performances were observed and documented to make recommendations for future improvements. However, Evaluator observations focused primarily on team actions and the interaction between teams rather than on individual players.

CHAPTER 2 – EXERCISE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The PAS faculty established the following goals and corresponding objectives and sub-objectives for this exercise. The exercise goal was demonstrated and accomplished during the execution of the scenario. The PASEX students successfully demonstrated an effective crisis action plan in response to scenario events. However, execution highlighted ways that future application of the PASEX as part of the ACSC curriculum could be improved.

Goal: Develop student appreciation for the complexity of interagency coordination.

Objective: Demonstrate the ability to conduct crisis action planning as part of an interagency response to a complex international disaster.

Sub-Objective: Demonstrate the ability to accurately assess critical information as it relates to US capabilities and the specific needs of the country/region in need of HA/DR assistance.

CHAPTER 3 – EXERCISE EVENTS SYNOPSIS

The events depicted in this scenario are representative of the increase in US HA/DR related activities around the globe. The potential for US involvement in such activities remains high due to the associated security concerns and the demonstrated capability of the US government to provide HA/DR.

STARTEX -30 days

The PACOM and Indonesian Country Teams were assigned by the course instructor. All PASEX students were provided with an Indonesian Primer document. *See Attachment 1.* This primer was designed to provide the PASEX participants with a historical context and statistical data to help develop a basic understanding of the country and its organization. The primer contained detailed information as listed below.

- Overview
 - National Overview
 - State Fragmentation

- Social Division
 - Terrorism
 - Regional Tension
 - Economic Stability
- History
 - Indonesia under Yudhoyono (October 2004-present)
 - National Identity
 - Historical Background
- Travel Information
 - General
 - Entry/Exit Requirements
 - Aviation Safety Oversight
 - Health
 - Medical Facilities and Health Information
- At a Glance
 - Population Overview
 - Ethnic Groups, Religions, and Languages
 - Geography, Climate, and Topography
- Government
 - Political Stability
 - Political Overview
 - Foreign Affairs
 - Foreign Policy Overview
 - Relations with the US
 - Military Cooperation Background
- Infrastructure Overview
 - Communication
 - Telecommunications
 - Transportation
 - Roads
 - Public Transport
 - Railways
 - Waterways
 - Airports
 - Civil Airlines
 - Ports

STARTEX -14 days

All PASEX students were provided with an initial situation report. *See Attachment 2.* This report specified HA/DR actions would be the result of an Indonesia West Sumatra earthquake and possible associated tsunami. The initial report indicated that an earthquake measuring 7.6 on the Richter scale struck at 17:16 local time (10:16 UTC, 06:16 US EST) off the coast of Western Sumatra, Indonesia. The epicenter was 49.7 miles deep in the ocean, approximately 28 miles west northwest of West Sumatra's provincial capital of Padang. The quake was also felt in the country's capital of Jakarta which is located 590 miles southeast of the epicenter.

The earthquake reportedly caused extensive damage to houses, buildings, infrastructure, and bridges throughout the region. At least one major hospital and the primary airport in Padang were reported as collapsed and/or closed. Due to the time of the earthquake, most people near the impacted urban centers were either at work or on their way home from work, increasing the likelihood of fatalities and injuries resulting from collapsed buildings and/or bridges and roads.

Students were instructed to use the information to gain insight into specific roles and responsibilities as they related to the HA/DR effort and begin to think critically about organizing a US response. The PACOM JPG Team was instructed to go to each of the PACOM component web pages and research information on available units and capabilities. The ICT was instructed to go to the US Embassy Indonesia and State Department web pages and develop a familiarity with offices and their roles.

Participants from each team utilized the time available to gather the necessary background information.

STARTEX -2 days

All PASEX students were provided with a PASEX Student Guide. *See Attachment 3.* This guide outlined the method of instruction and listed the course and exercise objectives. The guide also provided scenario preparation guidance and discussed the linkage of specific roles and responsibilities to the objectives.

STARTEX

0800 CST: Both the ICT and the PACOM JPG Team are assembled in separate seminar rooms. Each is instructed to limit communications between teams to phone, fax, or email. Each team receives a situation update as follows:

Scenario events begin on Wednesday, March 24, 2010. Another earthquake measuring 6.8 on the Richter scale struck South Sumatra at 08:52 local time (21:52 US EST) 135 miles southeast of Padang and 435 miles northwest of Jakarta. The scenario follows the Indonesian Country Team and the PACOM JPG Team through their initial assessment and reaction to the disaster. The situation has placed an increased strain on the Indonesian ability to respond to the crisis and threatens regional stability. *See Attachment 4.*

Indonesian Country Team (ICT)

At STARTEX through the duration of the exercise, team members received scattered disaster inputs/assessments from a variety of sources. The sources presented conflicting data. The team then began to question the validity of the data and was forced

0904 CST: The ICT provides the PACOM JPG with the first update to the situation. The message traffic stated the Government of Indonesia (GoI) is accepting USAR support to include medical supplies, equipment, personal, field hospitals, food, tents, heavy equipment for search and rescue (S&R), and S&R teams in order to provide relief to victims. Additionally, the request for a PACOM HAST is made.

0920 CST: The ICT informs the PACOM JPG that the GoI has provided blanket visa approval for all personnel providing FHA.

1005 CST: The ICT forwards a formal request from a senior rep at the GoI for food support to 38,000 families in the worst affected areas, shelter support for 100,000 and water purification equipment. The message traffic also requests PACOM start early considerations on those requests and suggests limiting the pork distribution due to the predominantly Muslim population in the region.

In this same correspondence, PACOM was advised on the GoI ability to provide rations and the associated limitations. The ICT requested support for 38.5 thousand families for 4.5 days beyond the GoI ability to support for 2.5 days.

Tactical airlift to supplement the GoI and Indonesian military airlift capabilities as well as that being provided by the Australian military was also requested.

1040 CST: The ICT forwards updated relief support estimates.

1045 CST: ICT forwards details for DART arrival in country

- GoI waived visa requirements for all FHA personnel
- Port of entry into Sumatra is restricted to Minangkabau Int'l Airport
 - Road access is open from MIA to disaster areas

Throughout the remainder of the exercise, as updated information was injected into the scenario, the information was reviewed for validity and forwarded to the requisite ICT or PACOM JPG as required.

1430 CST: The PASEX was terminated.

PACOM JPG

0810 CST: PACOM JPG conducts brief meeting to assign tasks and individual responsibilities. Individual components are given 30 minutes to review the updated scenario and begin to assess the situation based on the availability of assets and their associated capabilities.

0840 CST: The PACOM team conducted formal meeting to discuss key considerations relative to mission analysis and timelines for deliverables.

0850 CST: The determination to deploy a HAST is made. The HAST will help determine pre-deployment vulnerabilities, and conduct local health, food, water, epidemiological risk assessments, etc... The PACOM HAST will work closely with the local Indonesian military and the Department of State DART.

0930 CST: Permission was granted to redirect US Naval Carrier Strike Group (CSG) and Marine Expeditionary Units (MEU) assets toward the disaster area.

The remainder of the day consisted of coordination between PACOM, the ICT, and the Washington DC representative assigned to the PACOM JPG. This representative simulated direct contact and decision authority from Washington. Communications were conducted both by phone and via email. Topics included:

- Blanket visa approval for personnel providing FHA
- A listing of HAST members to allow the ODC to account for all US personnel in country providing USAR
- Establishment of a JTF and the setup location; WARNORD distribution to all PACAF ARG
- Also provided details on asset location and disposition including, CSG from Japan and MERCY request
- Coordination with the neighboring for possible utilization of their APODs/SPODs as staging areas to ultimately get supplies/personnel, etc to the JOA.

The PACOM JPG also attempted to pull information from the ICT to help expedite development of an accurate mission analysis and the associated PACOM support. Specific questions included:

- Which airfields/ports are authorized by the host nation (HN) for transporting relief equipment, supplies, and personnel to the Joint Operating Area (JOA)
- Will HN still retain positive control over the airfields/ports we are able to utilize?
- Is the HN they requesting assistance for airfield/port control and/or operations?
- What type of A/C and ships will we be able to utilize for this effort?
- Can the ICT provide any information as to the needs of USAID in coordinating the relief effort? What do they require from PACOM as far as military support goes?

- Has anyone attended any in country, interagency coordination meetings?

As HN requirements continued to flow in to the PACOM JPG, resource allocation became critical. The need for accurate information became increasingly important to ensure the appropriate level of response and prioritization was provided. On this subject, communications involved:

- Resourcing C-17 units at AK and HI for immediate transport of appropriate MREs, water, and tarps.

1100 CST: In analyzing the PACOM ability to support the HN and the ICT, PACOM conducted coordination with the Singapore government and secured access of the airports and seaports for aid distribution into the JOA. The plan concentrated on coordinating all heavy transport to arrive/deliver cargo into Singapore. From there, tactical intra-theater airlift (C-130s, rotary wing) could deliver to affected areas. *(Conflicted with direct guidance from ICT and GoI. See ICT inputs 1045 CST above.)*

1230 CST: Preliminary mission analysis complete.

1330 CST: Mission Analysis briefing to the PACOM CC. ***See Attachment 4.*** The information presented included:

- Commander's Intent
- Current Situation
- Assets Available
- Timeline/Recommendations
- End State/Objectives
- Tasks (Specified, Implied)
- Facts, Assumptions, Operational Limitations
- Initial CCIRs
- Mission Statement

1430 CST: The PASEX was terminated.

CHAPTER 4 – ANALYSIS OF MISSION OUTCOMES

This section of the report analyzes (1) how well the PACOM JPG Team and ICT achieved the expected mission outcomes in response to the simulated Indonesian earthquake scenario, and (2) how well the scenario prepared PASEX students to effectively conduct crisis action planning and/or assist HA/DR efforts in response to an international disaster at some point in the future. The focus of this analysis is on the processes rather than the actual outcomes (based on the level of experience individual team members have in the subject area and the fact this was the first implementation of such an exercise as part of the PAS curriculum).

1. How well did the PACOM JPG Team and ICT achieve the expected mission outcomes in response to the simulated Indonesian earthquake scenario?

PASEX participants effectively demonstrated the ability to conduct crisis action planning in response to an international disaster. The students demonstrated solid preparation for the exercise and maintained a professional demeanor for the duration of the exercise.

Both teams demonstrated excellent coordination given the physical and time constraints imposed at STARTEX.

The ICT sorted through random pieces of information to determine relevancy and direct questions to the GoI and PACOM JPG. The ICT worked effectively within their cell to reach consensus on a particular course of action. Problem-solving was worked as a team and conflicts were resolved through the Team Chief. Ultimately, the ICT effectively processed multiple data points and led coordination with the HN. Their efforts limited misinterpretations and significantly contributed to the US ability to provide rapid and effective HA/DR.

The PACOM JPG also demonstrated excellent coordination given the physical and time constraints imposed at STARTEX. The team conducted structured planning throughout the day and demonstrated a firm grasp of the principles and concepts learned during the Joint Forces and Joint Planning courses of the ACSC curriculum. The PACOM JPG worked effectively within their cell to reach consensus on a particular course of action (COA). Problem-solving was worked as a team and conflicts were resolved through the Team Lead. The final product (Mission Analysis Brief) was clear and concise, yet illustrated in depth consideration of many of the key variables necessary for developing a specific COA to rapidly and effectively address the crisis situation.

While the expected mission outcome was satisfactorily accomplished by both teams, there were several key obstacles to success. One of the biggest obstacles was the initiation of communications between the PACOM JPG and the ICT. Both teams spent considerable time organizing their thoughts and putting together their individual pieces of the puzzle. The PACOM JPG elected to limit initial communications so as “not to bother” the ICT so early in the process. This decision resulted in the PACOM JPG conducting initial planning in a vacuum. This was illustrated by the major disconnect over use of airfields and other political restraints which separated the ICT position from the PACOM JPG initial assumptions and position. This confusion could have been avoided if communications had been established earlier in the process, and assumptions & restraints or constraints been discussed.

Another obstacle to success was the ICT’s ability to sort through the random presentation of facts to determine relevancy. This provided a good test of ability to communicate/coordinate within the embassy cell as well as with outside agencies. Although the ICT ultimately waded through these details and got sufficient information to the PACOM JPG, there was some confusion in the process. The primary challenge was

to determine the accuracy of dissimilar numbers concerning the same issue by ensuring reports were from valid/trustworthy sources, and reconciling the discrepancies in numbers & units (e.g., people vs. households). This was illustrated by a discrepancy over food supplies for 39 thousand individuals as interpreted by the PACOM JPG versus the requirement to sustain 39 thousand household as was determined by the ICT. This confusion could have been resolved earlier in the process had the language remained consistent and revalidation of figures conducted prior to any final actions on the part of the PACOM JPG.

Finally, a greater understanding of requirements and expectations in this type of crisis is required by all participants. One example of how this hindered progress was demonstrated by the PACOM JPG. As noted by Mr. Kamps (PACOM team monitor/Washington DC decision maker), “the military assistance available will be highly dependent on airfield MOG, SPOD cargo throughput, etc. – all of which are available online.” The PACOM JPG was not aware that it should have been interested in these issues initially. Each team should be aware of the level of assistance that may or may not be available during a crisis situation and seek alternative methods for gathering information deemed critical to the success of the operation. In this case, a failure to properly analyze an Aerial Port of Debarkation (APOD) or Sea Port of Debarkation (SPOD) capability could significantly alter the ability to provide rapid and effective HR/DA.

2. How well did the scenario prepare PASEX students to effectively conduct crisis action planning and/or assist HA/DR efforts in response to an international disaster at some point in the future?

The PASEX scenario served as an excellent forum for understanding the complexities associated with conducting crisis action planning and coordinating HA/DR in the international environment. The course instructor (LTC Weaver) developed and distributed a primer. The primer was provided well in advance of actual execution (30 days) and provided students with the details necessary to develop baseline knowledge of the country. The details contained within the primer were more than sufficient for the exercise. 14 days prior to execution, PASEX students were notified of their respective roles and responsibilities, and were provided with an initial report of the crisis situation in Indonesia. This advanced notification and distribution of exercise materials provided ample time to become familiar with individual/team roles and responsibilities as they related to the crisis. It also provided students with ample time to generate questions. 2 days prior to execution students were given a student guide which clearly stated the objectives and linkage of the exercise.

Once the exercise started, the flow of injects forced students to think critically about the task at hand. It also necessitated clear, concise, and correct communications between all parties involved in providing the HA/DR to Indonesia. The exercise guidelines effectively simulated some of the difficulties the ICT and JPG would experience in the performance of their respective duties.

The feedback provided during the Mission Analysis Briefing was well supported and enhanced the overall learning experience for all participants.

Overall, the PASEX enabled students to draw upon the materials presented as part of the standard ACSC curriculum. As such, it enabled students to effectively plan and conduct HA/DR operations in support of the GoI. The structure exposed students to those items most critical to success in future HA/DR operations.

CHAPTER 5 – ANALYSIS OF CRITICAL TASK PERFORMANCE

Task 1: Determine the relevancy and accuracy of information presented to the ICT.

Issue 1: The ICT had some difficulty determining the relevancy and accuracy of information presented from external sources.

Summary of Issue: At times information was presented to various members of the ICT from “friends” within the country. The lack of familiarity with the supposed relationship between the ICT member and individuals within the country created some doubt regarding the relevancy and accuracy of the information provided.

Consequence: Students spent considerable time attempting to resolve the nature of the relationship between the individual and the ICT. This added an unrealistic level of confusion to the process and resulted in inefficient use of time.

Recommendation: The ICT must be aware of the number of relationships it has developed in country. The ICT must recognize the role these individual relationships play in collecting data as well as how these relationships can help validate information.

Task 2: Disseminate relevant and accurate information to the appropriate PACOM JPG representative.

Issue 1: Some information received by the ICT from external sources was not reviewed for accuracy or disseminated to the PACOM JPG.

Summary of Issue: At times the PACOM JPG either lacked critical information for conducting an accurate mission analysis or was presented with conflicting and/or inaccurate data.

Consequence: Outdated, exaggerated, and/or conflicting data was presented to the PACOM JPG which required continuous updates. This added confusion for both teams and resulted in inefficient use of time as well as inaccurate planning assumptions.

Recommendation 1: The ICT must remain proactive and aware of the changes in information it is provided. The ICT must take into account the source and be familiar with the external influences that may impact the data. The ICT must also be able to piece various bits of information together to develop a “big picture” perspective of how these data may affect other areas of the HA/DR effort.

Recommendation 2: The JPG must remain proactive and aware of the changes in information it is provided. The PACOM JPG must recognize discrepancies and be prepared to question the accuracy of the information provided. The JPG must also be able to piece various bits of information together to develop a “big picture” perspective of how these data may affect other areas of the HA/DR effort.

Task 3: Communicate effectively between the PACOM JPG and ICT.

Issue 1: Ongoing communication between the PACOM JPG and ICT was lacking during the initial stages of the exercise.

Summary of Issue: Both teams limited initial communications in an effort to review and analyze the information presented to them at STARTEX. The PACOM JPG elected to limit initial communications based on the perception of confusion in country.

Consequence: The limited communication in the early stages of the planning exercise resulted in inaccurate assumptions and delayed the mission analysis process and ability to take immediate actions in a time sensitive crisis situation.

Recommendation: Members of the ICT and PACOM JPG must be proactive in seeking answers to questions and providing updates between teams.

Task 4: Develop and present an accurate Mission Analysis Briefing utilizing the knowledge gained from previous ACSC core courses.

Issue 1: The mission analysis brief could have been more thorough.

Summary of Issue: The Mission Analysis Brief met the intent of the PASEX but lacked the level of detail required for a true mission analysis briefing in a real crisis scenario.

Consequence: In a real-world scenario the information presented would not have provided the commander with the level of detail required to begin working towards various courses of action.

Recommendation: PASEX participants must be made aware of the full expectation prior to conducting the exercise. See PASEX Recommendations in the next section for more information on this issue.

CONCLUSIONS

This exercise was the ACSC PAS Program's first HA/DR exercise to familiarize PAS students with the complexities of international disaster relief efforts. The student participants demonstrated a basic ability to:

- Assess a crisis action planning event
- Understand the unique requirements of various offices and agencies involved in the US Government response to HA/DR crisis operations
- Coordinate efforts within their respective teams
- Conduct inter agency coordination with limited resources and various time constraints
- Apply the principles and concepts learned during the JF and JP courses of the ACSC curriculum

The PASEX students satisfactorily completed all exercise objectives. In a crisis action planning scenario, the ICT and PACOM JPG accurately assessed the situation and conducted the coordination necessary to develop a comprehensive mission analysis brief within the allotted time period.

PASEX students identified several lessons learned from the exercise itself and provided feedback for consideration in the future application of a PASEX as part of the ACSC PAS curriculum.

Exercise Lessons Learned

1. When presented with conflicting assessments, exercise participants must be willing to challenge the validity of the information to resolve the discrepancy. Emphasis must be placed on ensuring the report(s) originate from valid/trustworthy sources. In doing so, the Mission Director (MD) must be proactive (vs. receive-only mode) in chasing down "ground truth". It is highly probable that the MD and other country team members would have personal contacts throughout the country. These contacts may serve as credible sources to verify information. USAID may also have field personnel in/near the disaster area(s). These personnel may serve as credible sources and be able to provide eyewitness updates. One final consideration is that the MD can take the initiative to send embassy personnel into the field to validate some of the assessments.
2. It is important to reconcile the discrepancies in numbers & units (e.g. individuals vs. households). 39 thousand individuals requiring sustainment significantly differs from 39 thousand households requiring sustainment especially if the average household consists of 4 individuals. Additionally, the accuracy of these numbers drives the immediate funding determination in Washington.

3. It is important to maintain situational awareness in such a dynamic environment. Reports must be analyzed for links with various other requests. As an example, as reports of injuries are reviewed, connections between various other pieces of information must be made. Such information may be linked to requests for a large number of shelters, medical assistance, and damage assessments relating to local hospital capabilities. In this scenario, it is also important to request assessment of the types of injuries. This information will help ensure the initial medical expertise is properly allocated and/or the incoming medical teams deliver the correct equipment. It is also important to realize reports may be duplicates or overlap. Consequently, it is vital to sort, analyze, and question each input. Ultimately, the information presented must be treated as pieces of a puzzle which when properly analyzed will provide the bigger picture.

PASEX Recommendations

The following recommendations are a compilation of key inputs from the participants. As such, they reflect those elements of the PASEX execution which could be modified to enhance the overall learning experience.

- There should be more direction with regard to what is expected from each of the individual roles within the exercise scenario. The DCM should be prepped with possible items/issues/products that should be expected from each position.
- Extend the exercise to 3-4 days of execution. Doing so will provide the opportunity to delve more deeply into a level of detail more representative of a true crisis scenario.
- Coordination at higher leadership level at ACSC should be made to both PACOM and Embassy that is being utilized for the exercise. This will allow PASEX participants to reach out to PACOM/Embassy for real world input/look. This coordination could have prevented students from being turned away. Had the ACSC Dean and/or Commandant notified/coordinated with PACOM and or the in-country embassy prior to conducting the exercise, students may be able to enhance the overall learning experience through access to current thought processes/products.
- The addition of an exercise handout similar to the one distributed during the ACSC JP Exercise would serve as a great starter. For example, a document listing what PACOM assets are available, where they are notionally located, and ETA to disaster area would enhance the planning process. Information should also include airport data (MOG, runway length, weight bearing, aerial port capability, etc...), port information, and LOC information.
- Future application of a PASEX HA/DR scenario should include a mission analysis briefing template. This would ensure the appropriate issues were highlighted and help ensure the appropriate emphasis was placed these key elements.

- PASEX participants and their associated roles and responsibilities should be identified earlier in the semester. Students could then be required to submit one of the smaller writing assignments with emphasis on their designated responsibility during the exercise. This would reinforce some of the key learning points and better prepare students to fully address the issues presented during the PASEX.
- As an alternative to the above recommendation, students could be provided with a 1-page information sheet on each organization assigned in the exercise. For instance, there would be a 1-page info sheet for the ODC position telling what their responsibilities are, who they report to, who they typically coordinate with, etc. Same for the PACOM Plans cell, logistics cell, each country team position, etc.
- Suggest that scenario inputs be increased to stimulate more student thought and require students to think more about the various responsibilities they will encounter working on a country team or within the JPG. The following is a list of examples which could be considered:
 - Additional inputs from different NGOs/IGOs on the ground in the host nation already responding to the effects of the natural disaster such as ground truth on situation and host nation incapacity to deal with the crisis.
 - An input to one of the ICT members to ask for immediate military airlift in support of a time sensitive logistics requirement to determine whether they are aware of how such a requirement should be handled.
 - Ambassador requests a NEO, which the ICT would in turn need to forward directly to PACOM.
- Embassy players need some background information on "local friends" who provide information. Assumption is that embassy personnel will have local contacts and will use those contacts to gather critical data. This background would assist participants in understanding the validity of the information presented and how such information could be used to enhance HN support during the crisis situation.
- PASEX students from both the ICT and PACOM JPG highlighted the importance of having participating instructors/evaluators have a common frame of reference and storyline for their respective injects and/or recommendations. Conflicting injects between the instructors/evaluators detracted from the learning process and caused both teams to waste valuable time in an already time compressed scenario.
- Suggest a two day trip to JIATF South to gain first-hand knowledge of interagency operations.

Other Feedback

The following additional comments (pros and cons) were provided by the PASEX participants:

Pros

- Most PASEX participants liked being put into a position that differed from the traditional Air Force roles and responsibilities stating it allowed them to research and think outside their individual comfort zones.
- Several participants suggested the experience of “walking the dog” with a counterpart elicited real world personnel experience one would expect to have during an actual crisis scenario.
- All students enjoyed having to talk through issues with various agency staff reps as it forced the participants to generate questions and answers to the problems posed throughout the exercise.
- All students felt the presence of an instructor as a key decision-maker for those issues requiring external input (DC etc...) was beneficial to the overall ability to learn key aspects of the scenario. The presence of the instructors limited the time spent “headed in the wrong direction”.
- Although putting each group together in one room (ICT in one room/PACOM JPG in one room) was an artificial set-up, i.e., offices would not all be in the same room, it gave students the ability to talk through issues thereby reinforcing key learning points. This allowed students to overcome time constraints and lack of expertise in a given area of responsibility.
- Almost every student felt the exercise was very applicable to what most students will be required to understand during their next assignment.

Cons

- Several comments involved expectation management. Participants reported the feeling of “digging” for information that maybe was outside of their particular area of responsibility.
- Some PACOM JPG team members felt the mission analysis briefing should be eliminated from the process. The impression was that the scope of the operation should be limited to the immediate force flow and logistics flow into AOR. The feeling was that a lot of brain cells were expended discussing other stuff and being critiqued on stuff outside the scope of operation.
- Both teams experienced technical issues concerning access to printers during the exercise. Although the ports were available for network access, use of the printers

was denied. Coordination must be conducted prior to execution to limit these issues. Having the access to printers in the room would have been very beneficial.

List of Attachments

- Attachment 1 – Indonesian Primer
- Attachment 2 – Indonesian Initial Scenario SITREP
- Attachment 3 – PASEX Student Guide
- Attachment 4 – Indonesian STARTEX SITREP
- Attachment 5 – Mission Analysis Brief